

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 06449 241006Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 IO-13 HA-05 ACDA-12 SSM-03 SSO-00 /090 W
-----010038 241008Z /14

R 240900Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6244
INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 6449

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV SOPN LE
SUBJ: MARONITE OPINION ON PALESTINIAN PRESENCE IN LEBANON

1. IN MEETING WITH EMBOFF DECEMBER 22, LEBANESE FRONT MILITARY COMMANDER BACHIR GEMAYEL SAID HE HAD HEARD THAT ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER BEGIN HAD SPOKEN TO A LEBANESE-AMERICAN GROUP IN NEW YORK DURING HIS LATEST U.S. VISIT. BEGIN WAS ASKED ABOUT LEBANON'S PALESTINIAN PROBLEM, AND RESPONDED THAT SOME PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON COULD RETURN TO THE WEST BANK, SOME SHOULD GO TO OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES, AND THE REMAINDER STAY IN LEBANON. BACHIR SAID HE THOUGHT THIS SOUNDED LIKE THE OUTLINE OF A REASONABLE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM.

2. COMMENT: THIS IS SUGGESTIVE OF A POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT MODERATION OF MARONITE OPINION ON THE PALESTINAIN PROBLEM IN LEBANON. MARONITES HAVE USUALLY DEMANDED THAT VIRTUALLY ALL PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON, EVEN THOUGH REGISTERED WITH UNRWA PRIOR TO 1969, SHOULD LEAVE THE COUNTRY.

3. ACTION REQUESTED: WE WOULD APPRECIATE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE WHATEVER THE DEPARTMENT CAN REPORT ON BEGIN'S RECENT CONVERSATION WITH LEBANESE-AMERICAN REACTIONS TO IT.
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PAGE 02 BEIRUT 06449 241006Z

PARKER

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Message Attributes

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